NEWS from the GOLDSMITHS

OR

A TRYAL

OF

Gold and Silver:

ADVERTISING

All Buyers and Wearers of *Goldſmiths Wares*, of the great Adulterations of *Gold* and *Silver* (with other Defrauds) which are practiced by ſome Diſhoneſt *Goldſmiths*.

DISCOVERING

The greatneſs of the *Cheat*, and eaſineſs of the *Remedy*; with Advice how to Buy *Gold* and *Silver Wares*, that you may not be Cheated: Fitted for the Uſe of the Country as well as the City.

Publiſhed for the publick Good, and not for private Lucre; to provoke the Goldſmiths, *to reform the Adulterating* Smiths, *and not to diſpariage the* Goldſmiths *Trade.*

By *W. T.* Goldſmith.

With Allowance.

LONDON,

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AN ADVERTISEMENT.

AND *for the Readers better Information, I refer him to another Treatiſe, intituled,* A Touch-ſtone for Gold and Silver Wares; *directing how to know Adulterated and Unlawful Goldſmiths Wares, and greatneſs of the Cheat therein; and how to puniſh the Offenders, and recover recompence to the party wronged: which is of great uſe to every Buyer of Plate, and all Buyers and Wearers of Silver Hilts, Buckles, and all other kind of Goldſmiths Work: Printed for* John Bellenger *in* Cliffords-Inn-Lane, *and* Thomas Baſſet, *at the* George *near* Cliffords-Inn *in* Fleet-ſtreet, 1677. *Price bound* 1 s. 6 d.

A TRYAL OF Gold and Silver, &c.

WHilſt ſome to promote their own private Intereſt are defrauding the whole Nation; I to promote the Nations Intereſt, am venturing my little *All.*

For the Adulterating of Gold and Silver, brings in ſo great Gain to the Practicers of that Deceit, that ſome of them have threatned the Ruin of any one that ſhall ſeek to hinder their Adulterating Trade; which is now ſo ſtrongly beſet by ſome Honeſt Goldſmiths, that it hath made Adulterating Goldſmiths deſperate. But let not the Honeſt Goldſmiths be diſcouraged from proſecuting their deſigned and intended Reformation, by any of their Threats, or any of their Contemptious Names, which they call you: for it is better for you to be called Informers (which in this caſe is creditable and praiſe-worthy) for diſcovering theſe Defrauds, than to be farther Guilty of the Nations Wrong, by concealing it: And though you who have formerly Adulterated Gold and Silver, but now abhor it, are upbraided with your former Practices; if you hold your Reſolution to make Satisfaction to your Cuſtomers, whom you have wronged by theſe Wares; you will evidence your ſelves to be Honeſt Men: notwithſtanding thoſe who ſtill practice that wicked Art, brand you with your former

former Practices, becauſe they would hold on theirs: Although they have no ſuch matter of Fact to lay to my Charge, ſince I have finiſhed my Apprenticeſhip; yet I muſt ſhare in their Reproaches, Revileings, Cenſures, Slanders, Scoffs and Scorns; which I have had a portion of already, for not joyning with others in Adulterating Gold and Silver; and ſhall doubtleſs have a greater ſhare now, when I labour to prevent others from going on in that Practice.

Let the abuſed Stranger therefore underſtand, That there is a certain Standard for Gold and Silver, according to which Standard the Coyns of this Kingdom (both Gold and Silver) are made: and as good as that Standard, all Plate and Small Wares in Gold and Silver is to be made (by Plate and Small Wares, I intend all ſorts of Gold and Silver Wares whatſoever; the Small as well as the Great) and that there may be no Defraud uſed by making any Gold and Silver Work worſe than the Standard, there is a very eaſie and ſure way appointed by Law for the regulating of thoſe Wares; the underſtanding of which may be of ſignal benefit to all who buy and wear any ſorts of Gold and Silver Wares whatſoever: the end and deſign of this Sheet, is therefore to diſcover it.

As for *London* and the places adjacent, the Company of Goldſmiths hath the over-ſight of thoſe Wares, and the tryal of them committed to them; and therefore three days in the Week, there is tryal made of any Workmans Wares (whoſe Name and Mark is inrouled in their *Aſſay Office*) and whatſoever Works they try and find Standard, is marked with theſe marks following: Firſt, The Workmans Mark which made the Wares (which is uſually the two firſt Letters of his Chriſtian and Sir Name; and every Workmans Mark differs from others) the ſecond is a Leo-

pards

pards Head Crowned, the third is a Lyon, the fourth is a ſingle Letter (the Letter which is uſed this preſent year being (𝔄) and whatſoever Plate or Small Wares, have theſe Marks on them, is not to be queſtioned but that it is Sterlin or Standard (that is as good as Money.)

But there being ſeveral ſorts of Small Wares, both in Gold and Silver, which cannot be Aſſayed and Marked at *Goldſmiths-Hall*, after it is finiſhed; it is therefore ſold with the private Workmans Mark: And to prevent Defrauds in this, All Workers in Gold and Silver, in *London* and its Suburbs, are required by Law to make known their Marks, to the Wardens of the Company of Goldſmiths, That one Workman may not ſtrike a Mark that is like another Workmans; and that any perſons which have Wares marked with the Workmans Marks only, may by addreſſing themſelves to the Company of Goldſmiths (at their Hall in *Foſter-lane*) find out the Makers of their Wares; and if the Wares which they have marked, be found worſe than Standard; the Company of Goldſmiths will procure the agrieved party Recompence, and puniſh the Workman. The Reader cannot but be ſatisfied of the excellency of this way of warranting Silver: but I ſhall ſhew you how its neglected to the Publicks great wrong. Although the Wardens of the Company of Goldſmiths, have power to ſearch any Goldſmiths Shops and Houſes, and carry away any Works which they ſhall make choice of to try them, whether they be Standard or not, and to fine the Owners, if they find them worſe than Standard: yet the Workers and Sellers of Gold and Silver Wares, being ſo numerous, and diſperſed in their Dwellings to all parts of the City and Subhurbs; it is not eaſie that all their Small Wares can be found out, by the Wardens of the Company to be tryed; they being ſold therefore upon the bare Workmans or Shopkeepers

pers Credit; and they having the marking of these Wares themselves; there are these Evils that do follow it,

1. Some of their Wares are not marked at all, though they may very well bear marking (whereby they are forfeited though they be Standard.) 2. Some of their Wares are marked with private marks, which are not inroulled at Goldsmiths-Hall: For some of them who have a Mark inroulled at Goldsmiths-Hall, will have another Mark not inroulled; which Mark they will set upon Adulterated Wares; and this Counterfeit Mark shall be so like the inroulled Mark, that it will not be known to be the unlawful Mark, by any that doth not know what Marks are inroulled, and what are not; for there is only this difference, As if $\frac{P}{B}$, one over the other, is the Mark inroulled at Goldsmiths-Hall; then B P (one by the other) may be the Counterfeit Mark; or as if S, be the inroulled Mark, then I S, may be the Counterfeit Mark: or any other way, according to the private Workmans Device: So that these Marks cannot be known by the Common People, which are inroulled and which are not; neither can the Company of Goldsmiths, find out the Makers of bad Wares, by such Marks as are not inroulled in their Hall, except some of their Servants providentially know them. The great loss which comes to the Nation hereupon, I shall discover, which take as followeth. The Workmen therefore and Shopkeepers, which have no more honesty; agree together to make their Gold and Silver Wares, as much worse than Standard as they please; which in Gold Wares, such as Rings, Chains, Corral-Sockets, Bells, Bodkins; and almost all other small Wares in Gold, is worse than Standard, some 5 *s.* in the Ounce, some 10 *s.* in the Ounce, some 15 *s.* in the Ounce, some 1 *l.* in the Ounce, some 2 *l.* in the Ounce; which is half in half. And I may go on farther, for they do not stop there, but according

ding to their own wills and pleaſures, go on in their Adulterating Defrauds, as if there was neither Law nor Judges to puniſh them, but there is both; and that which is wanting, is chiefly Proſecutors. Now the greatneſs of which Adulterating Cheat, I ſhall ſhew you in one Example of a Ring, about the uſual or moſt common courſneſs: I find a Burial Ring by the Aſſay worſe than Standard two Carracts, one Grain and three Quarters, which is in one Ounce 8 *s.* 11 *d.* 1 *q.* and it may be two-hundred of theſe Rings have been bought (or may hereafter be) by one party; which two hundred Rings may weigh twenty five Ounces, and the Buyer payeth 4 *l.* an Ounce (beſides the making or faſhion) which is the price of Standard: now reckon for the 25 Ounces (which is the ſuppoſed weight of the two hundred Rings) ſo many times 8. *s.* 11 *d.* 1 *q.* which the one Ring is worſe than Standard; and it amounteth to 11 *l.* 3 *s.* 5. *d.* 1 *q.* ſo that if one party in one parcel of Burial Rings, be cheated ſo great a ſum; what is the whole Nation cheated in Adulterated Wares? In Silver their practice is no better, for in moſt ſorts of Small Wares (which would fill my ſheet too innumerate) ſuch as Boxes, Bodkins, Buttons, Buckles, Claſps, Corral-Sockets, or Garniſhes, Chains, *&c.* is the like Adulteration uſed: the uſual price they take for theſe is 5 *s.* the Ounce beſides the making (or faſhion) when upon the Aſſay, I have ſeldom found any more worth than 4 *s.* the Ounce, and ſome worth but 3 *s.* 6 *d.* the Ounce, ſome worth but 3 *s.* ſome worth but 2 *s.* 6 *d.* the Ounce, ſome worth but 2 *s.* and ſome no better than Braſs Mony; ſo that as ſome Braſs Mony is better than others, ſo is ſome Goldſmiths Wares. And as if theſe Adulteratings of Gold and Silver were not enough, theſe Adulterating Goldſmiths, have farther added, to put clean Copper or Braſs Clappers, into their Silver Bells, and Braſs Wire into their Coral Sockets;

Sockets; and that no ſmall quantity, ſometimes half an Ounce, ſometimes three quarters of an Ounce, or more, or leſs; as the Coral Socket will contain. Now the Reader may ſay to me, you have ſhewn us our loſs, but how ſhall we be helped; in which caſe I refer him to the Company of Goldſmiths, *London*; where any Adulterated Wares may be tryed; and if you can evidence of whom you bought your Wares, the Company will procure you ſatisfaction, and puniſh the Goldſmith which wronged you; and this without your trouble or charge: But the Adulterating of Gold or Silver Wares, forfeits double their worth; and therefore any agrieved party may proceed againſt the Goldſmith which has wronged him, by Action, Bill, Plaint, Information, or otherwiſe, wherein no Eſſoyn, Protection, or Wager of Law, ſhall be admitted for the Defendant. *Stat.* 18 *Eliz.* 15.

And now, O my Country Men, who are greatly impoſed upon and wronged, by diſhoneſt Goldſmiths, and Traders in their Works, both in City and Country; you are to be advertiſed: That in the City of *York*, *Newcaſtle upon Tine*, *Lincoln*, *Norwich*, *Briſtoll*, *Salisbury*, and *Coventry*; it is ordained by the *Stat.* 2 *Hen.* 6. 14. that every one ſhall have divers Touches, according to the Ordinance of the Mayors, Bayliffs, or Governours of the ſame Towns; and the Goldſmiths, in theſe Towns are to be ordered in the ſame manner as in *London*. And moreover, If any Goldſmith within the Realm of *England*; in any place where no Touch-Town is, ſhall make or ſell worſe Silver and Gold Wares than Mony, or omit to mark it; they are anſwerable for it (as thoſe in *London*) To conclude, I adviſe all Buyers and Wearers of Gold and Silver, both in City or Country; to ſee that their Plate have the *London* Touch, which is before deſcribed: and for ſuch things as cannot have them; to take Bills under the Goldſmiths Hands, they buy off, that it is Standard Gold, and Sterling Silver.

And that I may perſwade theſe Adulterating Goldſmiths to reform, I thought good farther to add, That two Workmen of the Trade, upon their Death-Beds, had nothing lay more upon their Conſciences, and broke their Souls Peace, than the Adulterating of Gold and Silver; though they did it for the Goldſmiths, who would have ſuch Work and not Standard.

FINIS.